

# **Metro Milers' Route 66 Festival Run is one full of spirit for all ages**

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EDWARDSVILLE –The Metro Milers have had quite an impact on running throughout the region and one of their key events each year is the Route 66 Festival Run.

The 10K race was held on May 26, and once again had significant participation. The run originated as a part of the annual Route 66 Festival, and it helped lead to the formation of the Metro Milers running club, of which Feldmann is an active part.

“Originally, the race started because the event, the Route 66 Festival and we were looking for another way to continue to support all the activity,” Feldmann said. “It got started, and really, the race started the club, the Metro Milers, because we were able to

bring money back in, have a little profit, and the profit needed to go to a non-profit. So I said: 'hey, let's start a running group.' So that was about 12 years ago, and today, the Metro Milers are about 62 members strong.' We run at least twice a week, from Run Well on Wednesdays and from Complete Fitness on Saturdays.”

Another highlight of the race are the spirit stations that were located in different places along the course. They're humorous signs and other surprises designed to keep the runners' spirits up during the race. That, along with the competition itself, are among the event's highlights. The spirit stations definitely create smiles in the competitors and seem to literally create a special camaraderie between the runner and those encouraging them.

“Well, I'd like to see everybody finish strong,” said Feldmann, who serves as director along with Erica Hunt. “Certainly, I'm always happy for our fast runners to come in and do well. But you know, I'm a middle of the pack runner, and I just want people to have a great time. I want them to enjoy our spirit stations; there will be eight spirit stations out there rooting for these runners and cheering for them, and competing for the opportunity for some prize money from the race.

“That's a great thing,” Feldmann said of the spirit stations. “The runners see little funny signs that say things like 'May the course be with you,' and “run like your Iphone's at one percent,' silly signs like that. Last year, we had a spirit station set up a bluegrass band, and they were wearing like they were straight out of the North Carolina mountains or something like that. They were having a good time out there.”

Edwardsville's Keith Meyer followed up his win in the Run for Bonifest 5K May 26 by winning the men's division of the Route 66 10K Road Race in downtown Edwardsville. Meyer's winning time was 33:26, which was 2:16 ahead of second place finisher Luke Padesky of St. Louis. Padesky's time was 35:42 over the road course.

Aaron Werths of Granite City finished third with a time of 36:13, while Jon Yoch of Glen Carbon was fourth at 36:27. Justin Wieduwilt of Collinsville rounded up the top five with a time of 36:57.

Edwardsville runners took the top four spots in the women's race, with Krista Arnold the winner with a time of 37:24, with Crystal Harriss coming in second with a time of 38:30. Amelia Biggs was third at 41:30, Megan Bagheri finished fourth with a time of 44:02, and Angela Reckelhoff-Mueller of Troy rounded out the top five, coming in at 44:50.

A cloudy sky and warm weather greeted the field of 358 runners as the race started at 8 a.m.

In the male age group races, Ryan Luftjohan of Edwardsville took top honors in the 14-and-under group with a time of 43:56, while Grant Seniker of Brighton won the 15-19

group, coming in at 44:07. The 20-24 group was won by Jake Deal of Bethalto with a time of 37:32, while Yoch took top honors in the 25-29 group. Glen Carbon's Bart Smith won the 30-34 group with a time of 40:47, while Wieduwilt won the 35-39 group. Jeff Price of Edwardsville won the 40-44 group, coming in at 39:45, while the Masters division was won by Colby Garman of Caseyville, his time being 37:38.

John Roth of Dow was the winner in the 45-49 group with a time of 42:38, and Fred Rice of Belleville won the 50-54 group at 46:34. The 55-59 group winner was Bill Carril of Caseyville with a time of 49:22, while Jerry Grainger, of Wentzville, Mo., won the 60-64 group, his time being 49:32. The 65-69 group winner was Larry Wilson of Mattoon, coming in with a time of 55:00, and the 70-and-over winner was Mike Reinhardt of Edwardsville, his winning time being 58:07.

Over in the women's age groups, Makenna Lueking of Edwardsville won the 14-and-under group with a time of 36:35, while the 15-19 winner was Jaycie Hudson, also of Edwardsville, who finished at 47:12. Lea Viano of Carlinville took the win in the 20-24 group, her time being 47:22, and Edwardsville's Jennifer Mueller won the 25-29 group at 50:16.

Bagheri was the winner of the 30-34 group, Reckelhoff-Mueller won the 35-39 grouping, Rachel Jefferson, from Festus, Mo., won the 40-44 group at 50:41, and the masters winner was Rebecca Bradley of Edwardsville, her time being 46:22. Kristie Wells of Belleville took the honors in the 45-49 group, her winning time being 51:37, while the 50-54 group was won by Ann Knoyle of Glen Carbon, with a time of 48:10. Pamela Campbell of Hoffman, Ill., was the winner in the 55-59 group, coming in at 49:48, Janel Angell of O'Fallon won the 60-64 group at 56:00, Belleville's Mary Turpin taking the honors in the 65-69 group at 1:16:43, and Susan Tuner of St. Louis winning the 70-and-over division with a time of 1:43:22.

[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)